A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN BANGLADESH: PROBLEMS, PREJUDICES AND RESOLUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

It is true that though CLT is the well-researched, most globally practiced method in English language teaching today, very few works of worth have sought to investigate the practicability of this renowned method in the context of Bangladesh and the challenges that are necessarily involved. This study aims to explore this neglected area by pioneering an investigation into the essential features of CLT and into the extent of its (CLT) reception in Bangladesh. The study, in the process, examines definition and principles of CLT followed by a brief history of it and a review of the teachers' misconception about it. The study offers suggestions for possible means available for EFL teachers to mount the challenges in implementing CLT in Bangladesh. A questionnaire is attached on CLT containing pertinent questions for thirty five students of leading institutions of Dhaka and Barisal. The result shows that EFL teachers of CLT can benefit from CLT only if they successfully remove the barriers to implementing it.

KEYWORDS: Communicative Language Teaching, English as a Foreign Language, Practicality of Communicative Language Teaching, Misconceptions of the Respondents, Teachers' Role, Students' Role

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The historians of ELT have divided the chronological development of ELT into number of key episodes. Towards the end of 19th century, grammar translation method (GTM) became the new name of old method known as classical method. Today as we have reached a stage, where ELT as a sophisticated discipline has advanced much, the limitations of grammar translation method are evident by now. In the past, this method failed to live up to the expectations of the learners who were learning English as EFL as is this method is rigorously concentrated on a primary or a focal text which sets out rules and principles of language on a deductive basis followed up by exemplifications and illustrations of those principles that actually are thought to validate those primary assumptions. In this method the emphasis always squarely falls on the accurate use of grammatical laws but never seriously takes into account the wider connotations and ramifications of linguistic communication. As English has become the international language of trade and commerce, science and technology, politics and diplomacy, other dimensions of language learning along with diversity and flexibility have to be accommodated in the learning process. People all over the world are under the pervasive spell of English language either by choice or necessity. People are now more liberally inclined for conversation in English than before. Under such demand and sense of urgency, communicative language teaching (CLT) emerged. It is in England that CLT first marked its beginning. Immediately this methodology had revolutionary impact as the focus of the method unlike GTM is the learning and teaching of English in classrooms. CLT thrived in ESL (English as second language) environment, especially in non-English speaking countries where English is required as an essential mode of communication for manifold purposes.

As a result CLT became popular in western countries whose diverse interests required to popularize a method which is very accessible and disarming for ESL learners. CLT started its career in Bangladesh in 1990s with the aim to enhance learners' four basic skills (speaking, reading, listening, and writing) in English. At present, though the curriculum of Bangladesh supports the administering of English teaching and learning within CLT format, the present practitioners of EFL, in most cases, were trained in GTM. One impotent aim of this study is conduct a survey on teachers' viewpoint about CLT currently being practiced in the country without exception. Despite the overwhelming popularity of CLT across the country, it has been seen that the favorable responses from the teachers are not necessarily combined with proper reflection on its effectiveness. Hence some opposing views to CLT have been raised as to the practicability and feasibility of CLT in implementing it in EFL classrooms of Bangladesh. Though the ministry of education is committed to watch the implementation of CLT methodology under provisions of national curriculum, some indubitable evidences suggest that GTM method is still going strong in terms of dominating contents of teaching and learning in EFL classrooms. An investigation that that tries to understand the conceptions and misconceptions of EFL practitioners about CLT and the problems and pitfalls they encounter in implementing the method in the classrooms of Bangladesh may be very enlightening while providing insights as to application of this method in a more effective and efficient manner in the context of Bangladesh.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study attempts to make a brief but critical overview of the existing CLT practices in the context of Bangladesh. However it also delves deeper to inquire into the nature of causes that may underlie the somewhat ineffective performance of existing CLT practices in the EFL classrooms of Bangladesh. In connection with this, it also tries to understand why CLT, despite its high potentiality for contribution to ELT, have so far failed on the task of comprehensive integration of four basic skills in the classroom. It is also assumed that the findings of the study will be useful for other EFL contexts in Bangladesh.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review begins by providing an overview of English language teaching methods and tries to provide the background for the historical emergence of CLT. The later part of the review examines CLT as the latest trend in ESL/EFL teaching methodologies and explores the definition, principles, features and goals within this framework. In addition to that, a related survey is made on the existing works on communicative competence and its increasing role in the development of CLT. The last section, the most important one, is exclusively concerned with implementional dimension of CLT, as important issues such as feasibility, practicability and necessity CLT in different EFL contexts of Bangladesh are addressed.

Overview of English Language Teaching in Bangladesh

It is around 1990s that English was formally started to teach as ESL/EFL in Bangladesh and the practitioners seized this opportunity to master the target language in order to play a dominant role in the socio-political scenario of Bangladesh. Teachers were motivated to restrict the usefulness of the CLT within the classroom. This went contrary to the basic principles of CLT since CLT aims to develop learner's competence in the most comprehensive way –a notion developed by Hymes (1971) emphasizing the maximum communicative value of English within the broader context of society (cited in savington,2008). Referring to the wider applicability of CLT, Savington also stressed on the

socio-linguistic appropriateness of CLT, implying that CLT is not a method in the formal sense of having well defined monolithic shape rather it is a variable set of practices and strategies that different teachers adopt in relation to their constraints and environment. CLT as a set of such dynamic strategies is reality an integration of four basic skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. That is why teachers and instructors in the context of Bangladesh encounter problems and barriers in implementing such strategic and dynamic practice as CLT, which has ushered in a post-CLT era.

Definition of CLT

While definitions provided by the experts on CLT are many, the definition by Richards and Rogers (2001) held sway and is being considered over the years the most standard one, setting down norms and goals of this method. According to Richards and Rogers, the concept of communicative competence is the cornerstone of this method and the success of the method is principally based on the element of independence that practitioners and learners of this method between communication and language.

Although spoken skill constitutes the pivotal aspect of CLT approach, other three skills are also uniformly kept in perspective. Unlike the audio-lingual method where the bulk of emphasis revolves on the crucial aspect of repetition drills, the learners of CLT classroom cannot simply rely on the facile outcome of their performance as it is determined by the varying levels of aptitude and skills.

The Goals of CLT

As it can be discerned from the above discussion, the goal of CLT is to enable the learners and practitioners to communicate English with maximum ease and confidence within EFL/ESL framework and achieve rounded competence in all the skills necessary for communication with the society and the world at large. Helping learners to internalize the structures of English as EFL is also an important goal of CLT.

The Features of CLT

CLT is generally defined as a sum total of strategies regarding innovative and improvisatory approach to the acquisition of communicative competence, which explains why CLT is not a method in the traditional sense, but rather an inclusive approach. David Nunan (1991) outlines five key features of CLT:

- emphasis on the interactive mode of learning in the target language

- focus on the invariable use of the authentic texts in the learning context

- learners requiring not only to focus on the learning contents but also on the Learning Management process

- emphasis on the introduction of the personal experience of learners as an important contributing factor in the classroom

- bridging the learning contents of the classroom with broader sphere of life outside the classroom

Everything done in the CLT classroom is done with a communicative focus. Tasks such as role play, problem solving tasks, and language games are all part of the plans to enhance the overall effectiveness of CLT.

The Role of Teachers and Students in CLT

The roles of teachers and students in CLT classrooms are very dynamic, interactive and complementary.

Unlike other methodologies of ELT, CLT allows a teacher to enjoy greater freedom and maximum options in making the ELT classroom more target oriented, communicatively open ended and most importantly, livelier than ever. The role of a teacher pivots on the concept that the teacher is a manager of classroom activities. He is also seen as the facilitator of communication, working in various dimensions such as advising students, answering their questions and monitoring their performance. Modern CLT theorists view a teacher even as 'co-communicator' in a classroom (Little wood 1981), as teachers are no longer regarded in their formidable magisterial roles. As Larsen Freeman says that, while a teacher in CLT classroom fulfills the role of the initiator of activities, he allows the students to learn to communicate by communicating (Larsen-Freeman 1986). By setting multiple configured tasks, pairs, triads, small groups, CLT teachers offer students' opportunities to exhibit their personality and individuality by having them express their ideas in the target language on regular basis (Little wood 1981). Key to this approach is the basic assumption that students must realize that target language is not just an object to study but also a vehicle to communication. Thus by facilitating communication and by under taking many innovative measures that boost learners confidence and make manifest learners' personality in course of learning, a CLT teacher makes substantially concrete contribution in making the class truly interactive and in ensuring maximum participation of learners in the learning process (Larsen-Freeman 1986).

Motivation and CLT

Motivational factors in CLT are regarded as driving force in successful conduction and implementation of programmes in this particular methodology (Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project, Module 1, 2006). Motivation is normally divided in two categories; extrinsic and intrinsic. While emphasis on extrinsic motivation such as passing exam or getting good job are quite common, it is currently believed that the success of CLT, to a great extent, depends on learners feeling psychologically stimulated to the task of learning. The sources of intrinsic motivation are quite variable; often the teachers' personality, classroom ambience, emotive elements serve as intrinsic motivation. Teachers' rapport with the students, his interesting personality, the presence of amusing character work as predisposing factors for learners' motivation. As intrinsic motivation is not based on superficial ends but on learners' sincerity and willingness to learn, it performs more effectively in deepening the impact of learning.

Syllabus and CLT

It is always very challenging to define the parameters of syllabus in CLT because the planners always have to think about an up-dated, up-to-minute, efficacious, improvisatory format that ensures learners emotional participation as well as promotes his skills. Usually features like grading system, attendance policy, assigned reading, papers deadline, course outline characterize a CLT syllabus. The syllabus in CLT format is not narrowly conceived in terms of grammatical structure but in terms of 'notions' and 'functions'. CLT always aims at the creativity of task and diversity of principles that are compatible with its goals. Hence, a CLT syllabus welcomes a contingent determination rather than a strict theoretical consistency (Barman, Sultana, Basu 2006)

History of CLT in Bangladesh

Compared to other methods, CLT is a later addition to the ELT in the 20th century. Initially it was practiced in England few other European countries; later it enjoyed a wider coverage. Actually, CLT had to travel quite some trajectory before it became what it is today. CLT is a development of changes that took place in the British Situational Language Teaching Approach back in 1960s (cloud).In Bangladesh CLT was introduced in 1990s at a time when it was

felt most urgent. Though Bangla was used as official language since Independence, it only complicated the matter for the researchers who attempted higher study in texts, journals and books only available in English. Though English was made compulsory from the play group in the educational system of Bangladesh, it failed to show any significant improvement in the skill and aptitude levels of learners. Thus, the failure of earlier methods provided the background for the introduction of CLT in Bangladesh that addressed the issue of the integration of skills so far neglected in other methods.

Class Room Activities

The study focus on answering the following points:

- Attitudes of English teachers in Bangladesh towards CLT

- Persistent problems in English teaching in Bangladesh

- Evaluation of the contribution of communicative language teaching to teaching of English in Bangladesh

- The roadblocks faced by the EFL teachers in implementing CLT techniques in the classrooms of Bangladesh. The ways these challenges can be overcome.

METHODOLOGY

Carrying out a comprehensive research on the above points that participants are engaged with and following the right procedures by which the participants are equipped with sound instrument for data collection.

Participants

The participants selected for this study are 35 in number who are selected from urban and rural institutions of Bangladesh of secondary and higher secondary levels. They belong to the age group of 28 to 55 with experience ranging from 3 to 15 years. The reason that justifies this selection of participants is to pick teachers of diverse background, who are used to teaching EFL in classrooms. The variety of their responses is required to test out the feasibility of CLT techniques in the context of Bangladesh. We requested to fill in the questionnaire and they completed in 20 to 30 minutes. This survey was conducted outside Dhaka-the capital of Bangladesh, at remote and more disadvantageous locations for learning EFL. The perception of these teachers/participants thus reflects incontestably the general scenario of EFL in Bangladesh.

Instruments

In this study, the data was collected was collected and assessed on the basis written questionnaire used in the survey in order to understand the participants perception about CLT. The questionnaires are open to assessment for their efficacy and reliability. The questionnaires were given to 35 participants who expressed through these questionnaires their most intimate perception about the challe3nges and difficulties involved in the implementation of CLT in Bangladesh. The instrument of the survey is also designed to elicit the participants' suggestion of the ways these challenges can be successfully tackled and overcome. The detailed study of the survey is shown in the appendix

Data Collection and Analysis

After detailed examination of the feedback from the participants, a meticulous analysis was made of the responses as to the perception of the participants regarding challenges to the implementation of CLT and probable ways to tackle them

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY

The survey questionnaires of appendix A and appendix B are tailor-made for the EFL teachers teaching at different institutions of Bangladesh at secondary and higher secondary level. The questionnaires of appendix A reflects the awareness of the participants of different teaching methods in Bangladesh, especially of CLT as a distinct methodology; it also reflects their awareness of the inherent challenges in the implementation of CLT as well as of possible way out of the difficulties of implementation. The survey also explores the efficacy and appropriateness of the CLT practices and the prospect of English language teaching in Bangladesh in general. Consequently a part of the study is devoted to suggestion of some changes that are required to be effected in the CLT techniques in Bangladesh.

Finding of Questionnaire in Appendix-A

The first and the core part of the essay is the important one as it bluntly relates to the goals of the essay. The questionnaire of this part comprised questions pertaining to English language teaching methodologies, particularly CLT. Here the participants were asked to indicate what teaching methods they were implementing in their classes, as well as, how frequently they were using a particular method. In addition, the questions in this part asked about whether the participants applied CLT in their classes and the causes for using or not using CLT. At last, they were asked to interpret CLT in their own words and specify what was contained in CLT methodology.

The Type of Teaching Method Implemented by Participants

Question: 1 (Table 1, Appendix-A) concerning the teaching methods implemented by the participants in their classes is designed to concentrate on the attitude of CLT in EFL classrooms in Bangladesh context. The result from the analysis of this question is clear that only 11.43% of the participants always try CLT method, 31.43% of them apply it often, 34.28% of them use it sometimes and 22.86% of the participants never implement it in their classes.

Attitude toward CLT

The participants were asked, based on the questionnaire, whether they have made attempts significant or not, to implement CLT in classroom, 68.57% responded positively while the rest 31.43%   answered in the negative (Table 2, Appendix-A). So the response indicates that CLT and its pedagogical impact is part of the awareness of the participants about CLT in Bangladesh.

Perception and Definition

In the interview, the participants in response to the third question, revealed a clear and cogent understanding of CLT and its communicative purposes. "CLT is the approach which emphasis on the ability of the students to get the message and deliver the intended message as accurately as possible" (Tanveer Ahsan, December 10, 2013). Tanveer in his concise definition went for the centrality of meaning and in its effective delivery as the important criteria for CLT.

"As a communicative approach, CLT aims a learner to experience situations that are meaningful and that they are likely to experience outside the classroom. Through such tasks that generate real life situations, CLT enables learners to learn the language communicatively" (Laila Rahman, January 12, 2014).

Understanding of CLT and its General Principles

One of the questions (Qs 6, Appendix-A) is especially designed to account for the perception of the participants

regarding the general principles of CLT. This question includes following eight items, some of which represent general characteristics of CLT and some of them represent the prevalent misconceptions of the Bangladeshi teachers toward CLT.

- CLT primarily focuses on the communication in a foreign language (L2) (94.28%).

- CLT is a learner-centered approach (88.57%)

- CLT relies heavily on speaking and listening skills (74.28%)

- CLT focuses on speaking skill only (11.42%)

- CLT attaches no value to grammar accuracy (8.57%)

- CLT involves only group work (48.57%)

- CLT requires teacher to have very good command in Bangladesh (57.14%)

- CLT profess fluency to accuracy (91.42%)

Findings of Questionnaire in Appendix-B

The second and the last part of the essay is the crucial one as it directly relates to the objective of the essay. This part explores the varying range of difficulties and inherent problems that participants encounter in their respective attempts in implementing CLT in EFL classrooms. The challenges are divided in three distinct categories for each of this category, participants are asked to make a 4 to 1 grading of their own like the following: major challenge (4), challenge (3), mild challenge (2), not a challenge at all (1)

Teacher Related Difficulties

This category reveals five major problems of teachers in Bangladesh relating to the task of teaching:

Deficiency in Spoken English

The survey based on the questionnaires showed that fifteen of the participants considered this deficiency as a major constraint. Twelve of them considered it as a challenge barring them from effectively implementation of CLT in the classroom. Though only three of them come to think of it as not a challenge at all, five of them regarded it as a mild challenge.

Lack of knowledge about the Appropriate Use of Language

The respondents showed, in their varying ways, that lack of knowledge of the language and the wider use of it in the target culture is one constraint in the way of effective implementation of CLT. Twelve of the respondents claimed it as a challenge while some twenty two of them regarded it as a major one. Only one respondent came to regard it as no challenge at all. His lack of apprehension of this challenge may be attributed to his exposure to the target language and the target culture for long seven years. Yet, one respondent showed a great concern for his poor knowledge of the target language and he thought his situation more miserable because of his poor sociolinguistic competence.

Lack of Training in CLT

The responses of the participants varied regard the issue of getting training in CLT. As many as eight of them regarded it a challenge, nineteen believing it as a major one while five of them finding it as a mild challenge. Only three

participants assumed getting trained in CLT constituting no challenge at all.

Lack of Time for Developing Communicative Materials

Most of the respondents are of the opinion that though CLT is an innovative approach, it leaves them with little scope and time to develop materials. In order to make the class more effective, the tasks and the text of CLT class also need to be correspondingly high in term of quality and ability to engage learner's attention. As the survey reveals 17 of the respondents consider lack of time as serious challenge, 12 of them as challenge and five of them as mild challenge while only one of them considering it as no challenge at all.

Misconceptions about CLT

The survey reveals that the participants are strongly aware of what are involved in CLT, though such awareness was not matched by the possession of the pragmatic knowledge for the implementation of CLT. Twenty three of the respondents confirmed that misconceptions about CLT are not a major barrier while seven of them opined that misconception worked only as a challenge. Three of the respondents held the completely opposite view that misconceptions are no challenge at all. The remaining two respondents said that these misconceptions about CLT were only a mild challenge to implement CLT in English classes.

Student Related Difficulties and Challenges

The second major category of constraint connected with the learners is discussed below:

Low English Proficiency

Twenty two of the participants spoke unambiguously about the learner's low proficiency in English as a major challenge, twelve of them as challenge. There is a lone conception among the respondents who believed that low proficiency of learners did not matter at all.

Passive Style of Learning

Passivity of learners was found by the respondents as a significant constraint retarding the implementation of CLT. Twenty one of them found them as a major challenge while eleven of them as challenge. Only three of them considered it as a mild one.

Resistance to Participate in Communicative Activities

Students' resistance and inhibitions toward a voluntary participation in CLT programmes formed another significant barrier in the maximization of the utility of CLT method in Bangladesh. The survey revealed that an overwhelming number of respondents, thirty two of them had no doubt of the fact that student's indifference to be seriously engaged with the method served as one of the gravest of challenges ever posed for CLT. Only three of the respondents held the contrary opinions.

Lack of Motivation for Developing Communicative Competence

The participants considered this also one of the toughest barriers in implementing CLT in classrooms. The twenty seven of the respondents deemed this as a major challenge while eight of them as challenge. The indications are quite clear that people of Bangladesh are not only aware of what CLT is but how important it is to be able to communicate in English.

Students' Preference for Accuracy

The legacy of GTM is still very strong among the latest generation of EFL learners in Bangladesh. This fact is confirmed by the responses from the respondents who believed that students' preference for grammatical accuracy to fluency is indeed one of the stumbling blocks for the EFL teachers. Nineteen of the respondents considered it as a major challenge while ten of them as a challenge. Six considered them as minor challenge while only one among the respondents thought that it was not a challenge at all.

Students' Tendency to Be silent Listener

The stubborn silence of the learners is completely opposed to the spirit of an interactive method like CLT, where a lot depends on the successful integration of learners with the learning process. Twenty of the respondents directly thought it as a major challenge where as six considered it as challenge. Only one among them regarded it as a mild challenge.

CLT Related Difficulties and Challenges

As many reckon it, CLT itself is one challenge in the implementation of CLT. The reasons are not insignificant. This discussion on CLT constitutes my last category regarding the problems and difficulties in the implementation of CLT in Bangladesh.

Lack of Support

Lack of support-technical, logical, material etc. perhaps the greatest challenge that EFL teachers in Bangladesh have to cope up with in successfully putting CLT in practice. More than half of the respondents regarded it as a serious challenge in the materialization of CLT, while fourteen teachers considered it as a challenge. Three respondents held that lack of support is a mild challenge while one respondent thought that it was not a challenge at all.

Lack of Authentic Materials

Lack of authentic materials is regarded as another significant barrier in the effective exploitation and utilization of CLT in Bangladesh. Twenty seven respondents deemed it as a major challenge, while six respondents held it as a challenge. One of the respondents viewed it as a mild challenge. Surprisingly one respondent judged it as no barrier at all.

Large Classes

In my questionnaire I included an entry on class management for the important feedback from the respondents. The inclusion is justified, as CLT as an innovatively sophisticated method, relies completely on the harmonious functioning of all components for its success and classroom is the place where the method has to be tested first. That is why, classroom management, since the introduction of CLT in Bangladesh, became a red concern for CLT experts for the fact that classroom in Bangladesh is a big problem in EFL classes it is very overcrowded and the space is disproportionately small, with fixed benches and chairs that thwart various role-playing, acting and games, group work etc. according to my findings, sixteen participants stated that students in their classes number between 40 to 50 on average, whereas twelve participants confirmed that they are between 40 to 45. Only seven participants informed us that the average attendance in their classes hovered between 36 to 40.

Heavy Loaded Program

In response to one item in the questionnaire, participants reported that CLT programs are too overcrowded or

crammed to be implementable in the context of Bangladesh. Because of limited time provision in the CLT method, teachers often had to cover too many grammar items in a very shot during. In most cases CLT programs are conducted by including productive language skills like speaking and listing in order to finish the syllabus within the specified time. Twenty of the participants confessed that it was a big challenge. Where, twelve regarded it as a challenge. Only three of them viewed that it was a mild challenge.

Inconsistent Differences in the Teachers' Responses

On closer analysis of the data collected, some patterns were detectable. Every entry in the questionnaire registered divergence of opinions among the participants. Though differences were not always stark, the questionnaire allowed for the slightest variation of opinions or for the degrees of differences to be recorded. One example of such subtle difference was the teachers' perspectives on the learner's attitude to speaking and writing skills. While almost all teachers shared the view that students of Bangladesh are more inclined to the skill of writing than that of speaking. Some qualitative differences can be found in the opinions of teachers teaching at both secondary and higher secondary level from that opinions of teachers teaching only at primary level. Teachers with experience of teaching at advanced level testifies that students are not motivated enough to pursue the speaking skill with the same enthusiasm that they showed to the writing skill. The syllabus is designed in such a way that they can skip the stages of productive language development and yet handsomely meet the requirement for their academic tests. Students know that they can do without their skills and consequently take them very lightly. Teachers who teach at primary level inform us, on the other hand, that students at this level are not necessarily biased to any particular level as the demand is not pressing.

Consistency Between the Results and Literature

This survey, throughout, maintained utmost objectivity in its quest for information and data analysis. This is a fact that has been vindicated by the consistency of the survey findings with the basic assumptions of the literature. Based on these findings, it is logical to assume that problems associated with the teaching of English at other EFL institutions of Bangladesh is generally identical, with some minor exceptions. Problems relating to the implementation of CLT such as over- concentration on grammar, lack of training for teachers, over-loaded a crammed program schedules, learners' indifference to the development of communicative competence are parts of our common experiences of teaching EFL in Bangladesh and are far from being successfully eliminated even with the current CLT practices.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It is quite fair to say that my attempt to provide an overview of CLT practices in Bangladesh would have been more fulfilling the opportunity to venture to the rural areas of the country which claim to have the majority of the secondary and higher secondary institutions. If data could have been elicited from the English teachers of those institutions, the overall perception of the situation would have been more informed and holistic.

Another notable limitation of the study is that the students, the most important component of EFL classroom, could not be interviewed for their response to various CLT practices being implemented in the classrooms. If I could have assimilated their views in my findings documentations, the conclusion would have revealed more accuracy and factuality.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The study has certain goals and it has guided us to draw conclusions to the following areas (i) EFL teachers'

conceptions and misconceptions towards CLT (ii) problems and challenges inherent in the implementation of CLT in Bangladesh (iii) Suggestions to overcome them.

Analyzing the pool of data and observing the trends of opinion of EFL teachers, it can be affirmed that, there should be a provision for the in-service training of the teachers within academic policy, as required to make CLT practice. The in-service training will create scopes for EFL teachers to be better equipped with techniques and will allow them to pursue creative dimension of CLT as they encounter newer challenges in the implementation of CLT. My particular suggestion here is that a language up-gradation course should be made a key component in this teaching program.

As it has been evident in the study, one of the key barriers to the successful implementation of CLT in Bangladesh is the lethargic approach of the teachers to devising stimulating communicative materials for the learners. Time constraint and heavy workload are the two factors that explain such lacklustre performance of EFL teachers. That is why, I have pointed out that teachers workload should be lessened and working conditions ameliorated.

There is a clear indication in the study that there are some serious administrative loopholes in the educational policy of the country regarding our apprehension of the importance of English as the most dominant language of the world. The perplexity in the policy is reflected in that there is no strict monitoring of the implementation of the recommended class size nor are there any urgent efforts around to recruit requisite number of competent teachers to ensure the overall enhancement of learners' integrated skills.

Another important implication of the study is that revision should be made in the existing examination system of the county as the system is obviously insufficient in analyzing the needs of the learners and meeting them. Teachers still self-injuriously cling on to the grammar dominated exams and this has led them to focus on those skills that are only suitable for exams such as translation, vocabulary, multiple choice etc. Thus, they, in a fit of careless abandon, throw other important skills like Listening, Speaking, Writing in great disuse. So the study concludes with an emphasis to bring into practice other skills in the relevant contents.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Questions pertaining to language teaching methodology, particularly CLT:

- What teaching methods are you implementing in your classes? (Please specify how frequently you are using a particular method.)

Table 1

Methods	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never	Total
Audio-lingual Method	5	9	21	0	35
Communicative Approach	4	11	12	8	35
Grammar translation	15	12	8	0	35
Natural Approach	11	12	7	5	35

- Have you tried Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in your classes?

Table 2

Yes	No	Total
24	11	35

- How do you define CLT in your own words?

    ………………………

- Why did you or why didn't you try CLT?

    ………………………

- If you have tried CLT, how did you like using it in your classroom? (If you haven't tried CLT, skip this.)

    …… …………………

- What is involved in CLT methodology in your view? (Please tick one.)

Table 3

What is Involved in CLT Methodology in your View?	True	Not True	Don't Know	Total Responses
CLT is student/learner-centered approach	31	2	2	35
CLT emphasizes fluency over accuracy	32	3	0	35
CLT emphasizes communication in a second language (L2)	33	1	1	35
Table 3: Contd.,				
CLT relies heavily on speaking and listening skills	26	7	2	35
CLT requires teachers to have a high proficiency in English	20	14	1	35
CLT involves only group work or pair work	17	15	3	35
CLT requires higher knowledge of the target language culture	21	12	2	35
CLT involves no grammar teaching	3	30	2	35
CLT involves teaching speaking only	4	30	1	35

APPENDIX B

Questions pertaining to perceived difficulties/challenges in adopting CLT:

The following are some difficulties that other EFL teachers encountered in adopting CLT. Do you think that the following statements might be difficulties for you in implementing CLT in Bangladesh? Please indicate how big an issue each challenge is by circling the following response scales.

4 = Major challenge

3 = Challenge

2 = Mild challenge

1 = Not a challenge at all

- **Teacher- Related Difficulties & Challenges**

Table 4

Challenges Related to Teachers' Activity	4	3	2	1	Total Number of Respondents
• Teachers' proficiency in spoken English is not sufficient	15	12	5	3	35
• Teachers' lack the knowledge about the appropriate use of language	22	12	0	1	35
• There are few opportunities for teachers' to get CLT training	19	8	5	3	35
• Teachers' have little time to develop materials for communicative classes	17	12	5	1	35
• Teachers' have misconceptions about CLT	23	7	2	3	35

- Difficulties Student-Related & Challenges

Table 5

Challenges Resulted by Students' Activity	4	3	2	1	Total Number of Respondents
• Students' have low-level English proficiency	22	12	0	1	35
• Students' have a passive style of learning	21	11	3	0	35
• Students resist participating class activities	32	3	0	0	35
• Students' lack motivation for developing communicative competence	27	8	0	0	35
• Students prefer accuracy rather than fluency	19	9	6	1	35
• Students prefer to act as a silent listener and blindly follow their teachers	28	6	1	0	35